

Sanitized Approved for Release 2012 RDP

# U.S. Attache ousted By Russians as 'Spy'

MOSCOW, Aug. 26 (AP)—The Soviet Union today ordered United States economic attache George Payne Winters Jr., to leave the country, charging that he has been enmeshed in a spy ring.

A similar charge was raised on a Moscow television program by a turncoat American soldier a few hours later against the American Embassy Army attache, Col. Theodore F. Hoffman. The accusation against Hoffman by a former member of a U. S. Army intelligence unit in West Germany could foreshadow ouster action.

Vladimir Sloboda, 38, a Polish-born U. S. soldier who deserted his unit in Frankfurt, Germany, three weeks ago and sought political asylum in the Soviet Union, made the TV charge against Hoffman.

Sloboda declared American spies are sent to the Soviet Union disguised as tourists, members of official delegations and as diplomats. He named Hoffman during a discussion of diplomatic personnel.

Hoffman, who has been an Army attache here since May 1959, is in West Germany and could not be reached immediately for comment. U. S. Embassy officials had no immediate comment on the accusation by Sloboda.

(The U. S. Army, in a statement in Heidelberg, Germany, this week said Sloboda was an obsessive gambler and was heavily in debt when he disappeared early this month. Sloboda's wife also said he had been losing heavily at gambling.)

Winters, the economic attache, who is a 39-year-old bachelor from Denver, greeted the news that he had been ordered expelled with the statement: "I guess I have just won the lottery."

Tass described Winters as an accomplice of Russell A. Langelle, a U. S. Embassy security officer who was denounced as a spy and expelled last October.

The Russian story is that Langelle was caught red-handed handing over 20,000 rubles (\$5000 by Russian evaluation) on a public bus to a locally recruited agent. Langelle and his superiors denied the espionage charge.

A Tass dispatch reporting on the Foreign Ministry's



Associated Press

GEORGE WINTERS  
"... tit for tat"

move against Winters said investigation established complicity in the Langelle case "of other officials of the U. S. Embassy in Moscow, in particular of attache Winters."

The Ministry "called the attention of the American Embassy to the impermissible conduct of some of its officers" and demanded that such conduct be ended, the agency said.

Asked about the case, Winters said:

"They (the Russians) are building up their spy case now. This business about my being a spy is nonsense."

"They are playing tit for tat—we were one up on them (in expulsions) and I was an obvious choice because my time is up."

His 2-year tour of duty in Moscow was supposed to end Aug. 1. But his replacement has not arrived, so he is remaining until Sept. 15.

Winters served in Moscow in 1947-49 as assistant economic attache. From 1953 to 1956, he was a consultant on the Atomic Energy Commission. He rejoined the Moscow Embassy staff in June, 1958.

[His mother, Mrs. George Payne Winters Sr., 80, said in Denver that her son was employed by the Central Intelligence Agency instead of the Foreign Ministry. The Sanitized Approved for Release 2012 RDP